WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1   1.   A method of controlling use of program content, said method
2 comprising:

3   receiving program content;

4   storing said program content in memory;

5   storing a rule for determining whether said program content in memory
6 may be played;

7   receiving a first time out message operable for use with said rule,
8 wherein said first time out message comprises a time out limit indicating a time of day value
9 by which an update message must be received;

10   enforcing said rule by disabling playback of said program content in
11 memory.

1   2.   The method as described in claim 1 wherein said disabling playback of
2 said program content comprises reducing the quality of the playback of the program content.

1   3.   The method as described in claim 1 wherein said first time out message
2 comprises a system time of day value.

1   4.   The method as described in claim 3 and further comprising:

2   synchronizing a client computer to said system time via said system
3 time of day value in said first time out message.

1   5.   The method as described in claim 1 and further comprising:

2   determining a current time of day.

1   6.   The method as described in claim 3 and further comprising:

2   determining a current time of day using said system time of day value
3 and a local clock of the client computer.

1   7.   The method as described in claim 1 wherein said enforcing said rule

2 comprises:

3   determining a current time of day;

4   comparing said current time of day to said time out limit;

5   checking for a second time out message, said second time out message

6 comprising a second system time of day value and a second time out limit;

7   disabling playback of said program content if said second time out

8 message is not received prior to said time out limit.

1   8.   The method as described in claim 1 and further comprising:

2   receiving a second time message;

3   re-enabling playback of said program content after receipt of said

4 second time out message.

1   9.   The method as described in claim 1 and further comprising:

2   entering into a digital rights rental agreement to allow receipt of said

3 program content.

1   10.   The method as described in claim 1 wherein said disabling playback

2 comprises:

3   disabling playback of some program content while not disabling

4 playback of other program content.

1   11.   The method as described in claim 3 and further comprising:

2   synchronizing a local clock to a system clock by utilizing said time of

3 day value.

1   12.   The method as described in claim 3 and further comprising:

2   utilizing a local clock and said system time of day value to compute a

3   current time of day.

1   13.   The method as described in claim 1 and further comprising:

2   receiving a second time out message comprising a second system time

3   of day value;

4   disabling playback if the current time of day is later than the second

5   system time of day value in the second time out message.

1   14.   An apparatus for controlling use of program content, said apparatus

2   comprising:

3   a receiver operable for receiving program content from a content

4   distributor;

5   a memory for storing said program content;

6   code operable for implementing a rule for determining whether said

7   program content in memory may be played;

8   a processor coupled with said memory;

9   code operable for enforcing a rule coupled to said apparatus wherein

10   said rule disables playback of said program content if a time out message is not received prior

11   to a time of day value indicated by a previous time out message.

1   15.   A method of controlling use of program content, said method

2   comprising:

3   receiving program content from a content distribution server;

4   storing said program content in memory coupled to client computer;

5   storing a digital rights management rule for determining whether said

6   program content in memory may be played by said client;

7   receiving a first time message, said first time message comprising a

8 system time of day value and an expiration time of day value;

9   applying said digital rights management rule, wherein said applying

10 comprises:

11   determining a current time of day;

12   comparing said current time of day to said expiration time of

13 day;

14   checking for a second time message, said second time message

15 comprising a second system time of day value and a second expiration time of day value;

16   disabling playback of said program content if said second time

17 message is not received prior to said expiration time of day value.

1   16. The method as described in claim 15 wherein said disabling playback

2 comprises reducing the quality of the playback of said program content.

1   17. The method as described in claim 15 and further comprising:

2   receiving said second time message;

3   re-enabling playback of said program content after receipt of said

4 second time message.

1   18. The method as described in claim 15 and further comprising:

2   entering into a digital rights rental agreement to allow use of the

3 program material.

1   19. The method as described in claim 15 wherein said disabling playback

2 comprises:

3   disabling playback of some program content while not disabling

4 playback of other program content.

1   20. The method as described in claim 15 and further comprising:

2   synchronizing a local clock to a system clock.

1   21.   The method as described in claim 15 and further comprising:

2   utilizing a local clock and a system time message to compute a current

3 time of day.

1   22.   The method as described in claim 15 and further comprising:

2   disabling playback if the current time of day is later than the second

3 system time of day value in the second time message.

1   23.   An apparatus for controlling use of program content, said apparatus

2 comprising:

3   a receiver for receiving program content from a content distribution

4 server;

5   memory for storing said program content;

6   code operable for applying a digital rights management rule,

7 wherein said code for applying said rule comprises:

8   code operable for determining a current time of day;

9   code operable for comparing said current time of day to an

10 expiration time of day value received in a first time message, said first time message

11 comprising said expiration time of day value and a system time of day value;

12   code operable for checking for a second time message, said

13 second time message comprising a second system time of day value and a second expiration

14 time of day value;

15   code operable for disabling playback of said program content if

16 said second time message is not received prior to said expiration time of day value.